

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 641

INFO AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

DIA

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 2608

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BE

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT ELECTS OFFICERS, HEARS GOVERNMENT

DECLARATION

REF: BRUSSELS 2519, 2563

1. PRIME MINISTER TINDEMANS PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT APRIL 30
THE PROGRAM OF HIS MINORITY SOCIAL CHRISTIAN-LIBERAL
GOVERNMENT, ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF WHICH WERE RELEASED TO THE
PRESS APRIL 24 AND REPORTED IN REFTELS. HIS PRESENTATION WAS
RECEIVED WITHOUT THE USUAL POSTURING BY MEMBERS OF THE MILITANT
LINGUISTIC PARTIES BUT WAS INTERRUPTED ONCE IN THE CHAMBER
BY A SHOWER OF LEAFLETS AND SHOUTS OF "AMNESTY" FROM THE GALLERIES.
SOCIALIST DEPUTIES AND PARTY-CO-PRESIDENTS VAN EYNDE AND COOLS
INDULGED IN A FEW VOCAL OUTBURSTS FROM THE FOLLR BUT LATER TURNED THE
PROCEEDINGS INTO A SHOUTING MATCH WHEN COOLS READ INTO THE
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RECORD A PRESS ALLEGATION THAT THE FLEMISH SOCIAL CHRISTIAN AND

THE FLEMISH NATIONALIST (VOLKSUNIE) PARTIES HAD AGREED DURING UNSUCCESSFUL TALKS ON A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT ON A PRIVATE PROTOCOL BY WHICH THE TWO PARTIES WOULD SUPPORT, IN A FUTURE FLEMISH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY, AMNESTY FOR FLEMISH COLLABORATORS WITH THE NAZIS. TINDEMANS RESPONDED TO COOLS' QUESTION ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH A PROTOCOL WITH AN EQUALLY ANGRY STATEMENT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT PROGRAM STOOD AS PRESENTED; HE ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT AND NONE OF COOLS' ALLEGATIONS. THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM WILL BE DEBATED MAY 2 AND 3 WITH A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE EXPECTED LATE ON THE LATTER DATE.

3. BOTH THE SENATE AND THE CHAMBER ELECTED THEIR PRESIDING OFFICERS BEFORE TINDEMANS' PRESENTATION, THE SENATE RE-ELECTING ITS PRESIDENT, PIERRE HARMEL, AND THE CHAMBER ELECTING FLEMISH SOCIAL CHRISTIAN ANDRE DEQUAE TO REPLACE SOCIALIST ACHILLE VAN ACKER. VAN ACKER HAD RETIRED FROM PARLIAMENT. DEQUAE WAS ELECTED BY A MAJORITY OF 121 VOTES IN THE 212- MEMBER CHAMBER OVER SOCIALIST OBJECTION TO SELECTION OF PRESIDENTS OF BOTH HOUSES FROM A SINGLE PARTY (HARMEL IS A FRANCOPHONE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN). SOCIALIST CANDIDATE WILLY CLAES, FORMER MINISTER OF ECONOMICS, RECEIVED 65 VOTES. THERE WERE 24 BLANK BALLOTS, APPARENTLY CAST BY MEMBERS OF THE FRANCOPHONE LINGUISTIC PARTIES. STRAUZ-HUPE

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